

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SOLARZ LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT: INTER-
PRETATION OF THE HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE REPORT ON THE
TURKISH EMBARGO.

1. ACTING ON THE SUGGESTION OF TURKISH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL,
CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN SOLARZ (D-N.Y.) HAS SENT A LONG LETTER
TO TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT, TO EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFI-
CANCE OF THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
REPORT ON THE TURKISH EMBARGO ISSUE. SOLARZ WAS A MEMBER
OF THE HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND PARTICIPATED
ACTIVELY IN ALL ITS PROCEEDINGS. HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE
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OUTCOME HAS HELPED CALM THE TURKISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON
AND MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO ADDRESSEES IN EXPLAINING WHY
CERTAIN LANGUAGE WAS ACCEPTED BY HOUSE-SENATE CONFEREES.

2. SOLARZ, WHO SENT HIS LETTER TO ECEVIT VIA THE TURKISH
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, MAINTAINS THAT THE CONFERENCE DECIS-
ION EFFECTIVELY REPEALS THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO AND SETS
THE STAGE FOR A REINVIGORATION OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS.
SOLARZ CLOSSES HIS LETTER BY ASKING THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT
TO MOVE RAPIDLY TO REOPEN US BASES IN TURKEY AND TO INDICATE

CONTINUED WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE AN EQUITABLE CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. THE TEXT OF THE SOLARZ LETTER READS AS FOLLOWS:

3. BEGIN TEXT: AUGUST 16, 1978 DEAR PRIME MINISTER
ECEVIT: I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND AND GRACIOUS COMMENTS REGARDING MY EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS. OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST FOUR YEARS, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, I HAVE GOTTEN TO KNOW MANY WORLD LEADERS. I CAN SINCERELY SAY THAT I CONSIDER YOU AMONG THE MOST IMPRESSIVE POLITICAL FIGURES I'VE EVER MET. INDEED, I FEEL THAT THE TIME I SPENT WITH YOU DURING THE COURSE OF OUR EFFORT TO IMPROVE US-TURKISH RELATIONS WAS ONE OF THE MOST REWARDING CONSEQUENCES OF MY COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

IN THE WAKE OF OUR DECISION MONDAY TO EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATE THE ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO DISPEL ANY REMAINING CONFUSION OVER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTION AGREED TO BY THE CONFEREES.

IN SHORT, WE HAVE WON A GREAT VICTORY AND A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN-TURKISH RELATIONS.
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AS THE JOINT HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE REPORT WILL NOTE, THE ACTION WE TOOK "CLEARLY CONSTITUTES A DE FACTO REPEAL OF SECTION 620(X) ..." ONCE THE PRESIDENT SIGNS THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE BILL INTO LAW, ALL HE IS REQUIRED TO DO IS TO DETERMINE AND CERTIFY THAT THE RESUMPTION OF FULL MILITARY COOPERATION WITH TURKEY IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE US AND NATO AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY IS "ACTING IN GOOD FAITH TO ACHIEVE A JUST AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM, THE EARLY PEACEABLE RETURN OF REFUGEES TO THEIR HOMES AND PROPERTIES, CONTINUED REMOVAL OF TURKISH MILITARY TROOPS FROM CYPRUS IN THE CONTEXT OF A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM, AND THE EARLY SERIOUS RESUMPTION OF INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS AIMED AT A JUST, NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT." GIVEN THE TURKISH PROPOSALS TO ALLOW THE RETURN OF 35,000 REFUGEES TO FAMAGUSTA, THE WITHDRAWAL OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF TURKISH TROOPS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, AND THE EARNEST TURKISH ATTEMPT TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARD A SOLUTION TO THIS DIFFICULT PROBLEM, WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN SPEEDILY LIFTING THE EMBARGO BY MAKING SUCH A DETERMINATION AND CERTIFICATION. INDEED, IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE THAT THE EMBARGO WOULD BE PROMPTLY LIFTED, THE LANGUAGE OF THE AMENDMENT WAS DELIBERATELY DESIGNED SO AS TO NOT REQUIRE TURKEY TO DO ANYTHING IT HAD NOT ALREADY DONE, AS A CONDITION FOR LIFTING THE EMBARGO.

ALTHOUGH SECTION 620(X) WILL TECHNICALLY REMAIN IN LAW,
IT WILL BE OF ABSOLUTELY "NO FURTHER FORCE AND EFFECT"

ONCE THE PRESIDENT MAKES HIS DETERMINATIONS. AS YOU MAY
KNOW, IT IS NOT AT ALL UNUSUAL FOR OBSOLETE STATUTES TO
REMAIN ON THE BOOKS WHEN SUBSEQUENT LANGUAGE HAS NULLIFIED
THE EARLIER PROVISION. IN REALITY, THE SUBSEQUENT
LANGUAGE WE ADDED JUST AS EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATED THE
EMBARGO AS IF WE HAD EXPUNGED THE LANGUAGE FROM THE
STATUTE BOOKS. MOREOVER, THERE IS NO PROVISION IN THE
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LANGUAGE OF THE AMENDMENT ADOPTED BY THE CONFEREES FOR
A REIMPOSITION OF THE EMBARGO. THUS, IT WOULD BE UNFAIR
TO SUGGEST THAT OUR ACTION IS ONLY A SUSPENSION OF THE
PROHIBITION ON GRANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY.
INSTEAD, IT EFFECTIVELY CONSTITUTES A COMPLETE ELIMINATION
OF THE EMBARGO, AND WAS CHARACTERIZED AS SUCH BY BOTH
PROPOSERS AND OPPOSERS ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE.
INDEED, AS MR. BRADENAS NOTED DURING THE 1 AUGUST FLOOR
DEBATE, THE HOUSE AMENDMENT "PLACES NO RESTRICTIONS ON THE
PRESIDENT'S ABILITY TO SELL ARMS TO TURKEY BEYOND THE
FORMALITY OF HIS CERTIFYING TO CONGRESS THAT THE TURKS
ARE ACTING IN GOOD FAITH ... WHAT THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT
MEANS IS A COMPLETE REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO."

SOME HAVE QUESTIONED WHY THE CONFEREES STAYED SO CLOSE
TO THE HOUSE LANGUAGE IF BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE CON-
FEREES DESIRED TO LIFT THE EMBARGO, AND SOME HAVE EVEN
GONE SO FAR AS TO ALLEGE THAT THE INTENTION OF THE CON-
FERENCE COMMITTEE WAS TO PLACE IMPORTANT CONDITIONS ON
LIFTING THE EMBARGO. HOWEVER, THESE ARGUMENTS AND ALLEGA-
TIONS REPRESENT A TOTAL DISTORTION OF WHAT ACTUALLY
HAPPENED. THE HOUSE CONFEREES AGREED TO REPORT LANGUAGE
CLOSE TO THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT RATHER THAN SIMPLY ACCEPTING
THE OUTRIGHT REPEAL LANGUAGE OF THE MCGOVERN AMENDMENT
SIMPLY IN ORDER TO AVOID A FRACTIOUS FLOOR FIGHT FOR NO
USEFUL PURPOSE. IF THOSE OF US WHO SUPPORTED LIFTING THE
EMBARGO BELIEVED FOR A MOMENT THAT THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT
REPRESENTED NOTHING MORE THAN A TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF
THE EMBARGO, OR WOULD HAVE MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE
PRESIDENT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO BY MAKING THE NECESSARY
CERTIFICATION, OR WOULD HAVE REQUIRED TURKEY TO TAKE
ACTIONS IT HAD NOT ALREADY TAKEN, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE
AGREED TO ACCEPT THE AMENDMENT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
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MOREOVER, IN EXCHANGE FOR REMAINING CLOSE TO THE WRIGHT

LANGUAGE, PROPONENTS OF LIFTING THE EMBARGO WERE ABLE TO OBTAIN A NUMBER OF KEY CONCESSIONS WITH REAL MEANING FOR US-TURKISH RELATIONS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, WE PUT THE CALL FOR CONTINUED REMOVAL OF TURKISH TROOPS FROM CYPRUS "IN THE CONTEXT OF A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM", THEREBY MAKING IT CLEAR WE WERE NOT ASKING FOR A UNILATERAL

WITHDRAWAL OF ALL TURKISH FORCES FROM CYPRUS. SECOND, WE MODIFIED THE CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE THAT SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO "INSURE THAT THE PRESENT BALANCE OF MILITARY STRENGTH AMONG COUNTRIES OF THE REGION, INCLUDING GREECE AND TURKEY, IS PRESERVED," BY ADDING A SENTENCE STATING THAT "NOTHING IN THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT THE TRANSFER OF ARMS TO GREECE OR TURKEY FOR LEGITIMATE SELF DEFENSE OR TO ENABLE GREECE OR TURKEY TO FULFILL THEIR NATO OBLIGATIONS." FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, THIS MEANS THAT ANY SALE OF ARMS TO TURKEY FOR NATO PURPOSES IS REMOVED FROM THE BALANCE OF POWER CONSTRAINTS OF THE EARLIER SENTENCE. FINALLY, WE SUCCESSFULLY RESISTED THE EFFORTS OF EMBARGO PROPONENTS TO PUT NEW LANGUAGE IN THE AMENDMENT TO REQUIRE THE PRESIDENT TO CERTIFY THAT THERE HAS BEEN MOVEMENT TOWARD RETURN OF "THE" REFUGEES AND WITHDRAWAL OF "THE" TURKISH TROOPS. BY INCLUDING SUCH LANGUAGE, THE EMBARGO PROPONENTS WANTED TO MAKE REMOVAL OF THE EMBARGO CONTINGENT ON A WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF TURKEY TO LET ALL OF THE REFUGEES RETURN AND TO WITHDRAW ALL OF THE TROOPS. AS IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 WITH RESPECT TO THE MIDDLE EAST, OUR REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE WORD "THE" INDICATES THAT THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES TO RETURN AND THE NUMBER OF TROOPS TO BE WITHDRAWN IS A SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT.

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD LIKE TO REAFFIRM MY BELIEF THAT
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THE CONFEREES TOOK A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD MONDAY IN THE EFFORT TO IMPROVE US-TURKISH RELATIONS. WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BRINGING THE EMBARGO TO AN END, AND IN INSURING THAT IT CANNOT BE REIMPOSED.

TO BE SURE, THERE WILL BE MANY IN THIS COUNTRY WHO WILL NOW BE LOOKING FOR AN EARLY SIGN OF MOVEMENT IN THE EFFORT TO RESTORE CLOSE US-TURKISH TIES. ONE SUCH SIGN COULD WELL BE THE IMMEDIATE REOPENING OF KEY INSTALLATIONS IN YOUR COUNTRY, WHERE ACTIVITY HAS BEEN SUSPENDED SINCE 1975. A SECOND SIGNAL COULD ENTAIL PERIODIC REITERATION BY THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT OF ITS READINESS TO ENTER INTO DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.

WITH GOOD WILL IN BOTH OUR NATIONS, I AM HOPEFUL THAT

WE CAN NOW PUT THE EMBARGO QUESTION BEHIND US. I LOOK
FORWARD TO THE SPEEDY RESTORATION OF CLOSE RELATIONS
BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND TO THE DAY WHEN WE HAVE
AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN. CORDIALLY,
STEPHEN J. SOLARZ, MEMBER OF CONGRESS. END TEXT CHRISTOPHER

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